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NOVENA OF MEDITATIONS
IN HONOUR OF
SAINT JOSEPH





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A
NOVENA OF MEDITATIONS
IN HONOUR OF
SAINT JOSEPH
ACCORDING TO
THE METHOD OF SAINT IGNATIUS;
PRECEDED BY
A NEW EXERCISE FOR HEARING MASS
ACCORDING TO THE
INTENTIONS OF THE SOULS IN PURGATORY.

A. M. D. G.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.



LONDON:
R. WASHBOURNE, 18 PATERNOSTER ROW.
1874.

INTRODUCTION.

ANYTHING that tends to create an enlightened confidence in Saint Joseph must be welcome to those who look forward with earnest hope and filial love to a blessed eternity spent in his company.

Throughout this little work, now translated for the first time from the French, there runs a deep spirit of solid devotion to our glorious Patron, clothed withal in a form so simple, and worked out in a manner so practical, that it cannot fail to be welcomed by all who aspire to be counted amongst his true children.

It is thought that it will supply a need which has been felt by very many, of a little book, which, although it may be used at any time, is specially fitted for private use during the month of March, or in preparation for the Feast Day of the Foster Father of the Divine Word made Flesh.

J. P. W.

PREFACE.

AFTER the devotion toward JESUS our divine Saviour, and His holy Mother, there is none more salutary, more solid, or more fitting than the devotion to Saint Joseph.

This holy patriarch, whom GOD Himself chose to be the guardian, the protector, the nursing father of His only Son, the consoler and the support of Mary, is the special patron of Christian families. He takes a living interest in their welfare, and fills those who have recourse to him with celestial graces. Those souls, also, who are called to the service of our LORD in a state of perfection, find in Saint Joseph a special patron. Virgin Spouse of the Mother of GOD, he practised in the most eminent degree all those virtues which heighten the beauty of that purity to which are promised the blessings of the Lamb without spot.

Saint Joseph is also the director, the friend, and protector of all souls who aspire to perfection, in whatever state or in whatever condition they may be. The simplest and most ignorant people have been known under this skilful teacher to make astonishing progress in the great science of prayer, and the interior life. Finally, his tender charity causes him to desire for us the happiness that he himself enjoyed, of giving up his last breath in the arms of JESUS and Mary, so that he tenderly loves to help those souls who are on the point of leaving this world and about to appear at the Tribunal of God. In short, there is no state of life, no position, no kind of need in which his protection does not furnish a resource upon which we can confidently rely. All who have invoked him, have had the sweet experience of his inexhaustible bounty, and of his limitless power. Saint Teresa, among others, assures us that she has never invoked him without being heard, and that she never knew any one to have recourse to him in vain.

With the view of contributing in some

way to the glory of this great saint, we offer to pious souls this novena of meditations in his honour. They can be used with benefit at all times of the year, particularly at the time of the feast of Saint Joseph. It is then that all the treasures of Grace are especially placed in his hands. How can he refuse anything to those souls who join to the pious exercise of the novena, the care of studying and imitating his virtues—above all, if they crown these holy exercises with a good confession and a fervent communion?

FEASTS OF SAINT JOSEPH.

March 19th.

Third Sunday after Easter.

Patronage of St. Joseph.

A
METHOD OF HEARING MASS

FOR THE INTENTIONS OF THE FAITHFUL
DEPARTED, IN UNION WITH SAINT JOSEPH, THE
PATRON OF A HOLY DEATH.

Offering of the Sacrifice.

GOD of Mercy, I offer unto Thee the Blood of the Lamb without spot for those souls who are dear to Thee, and who desire nothing but the happiness of seeing and possessing Thee. However well-deserved their punishment may be, open to them, I beseech Thee, the immense treasures of the satisfaction of Thy Son. Hear the prayers which I dare to present for them, through the intercession of Saint Joseph, whom JESUS our Redeemer has constituted our patron and our advocate with Thee.

Introit.

Thou hast said, "I will give thee rest, for thou hast found grace before Me;" and "thee have I known by name. I will show thee all good."* Deliver them, then, O GOD of Mercy! save them, and give them eternal rest.

At the Byrie.

Have pity upon those who love Thee, O JESUS! Have mercy on those souls who lament in that place of expiation to which they have been consigned by Thy Justice.

At the Collects.

O GOD, Who because of Thine infinite bounty art always ready to pardon, I beseech Thee forget not the soul of Thy servant N., whom Thou hast called to Thy judgment. Saint Joseph, thou whom *he* has so often invoked, join thy prayers

* Exod. xxx. 12, 14, 19.

to mine ; thy divine JESUS has taught us that He refuses nothing to thy intercession.

At the Epistle.

Thou, O LORD, hast said, "Ask, and ye shall receive." Prostrate at Thy Feet, I beseech Thee to pardon Thy servant N. ; and the hope that my prayer will be granted, calms my disquiet. Oh ! how sweet is the yoke of Thy word ! O LORD my GOD, since the recollection of Thy promises suffices to effect this change in my soul, I desire to live and die in this holy and happy faith. Yes, I believe. Increase my faith. *Credo adauge nobis fidem.* O Joseph, obtain for me this ineffable grace, and the remission of suffering to the souls of the just in purgatory.

At the Gradual.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadows of death, I will fear nothing, for Thou art with me, O LORD.

“As the hart panteth after the fountains of waters, so my soul panteth after Thee, O GOD. My soul hath thirsted after the strong living GOD. When shall I come, and appear before the Face of GOD?”

O JESUS, our Redeemer, these are the supplications of the souls whom Thy Justice retains in the fires of expiation. Oh! listen favourably to them, for the sake of that Blood which flowed upon Calvary, and which is again to be offered up upon this altar.

At the Gospels.

O GOD, let the faithful departed for whom I offer up my prayers hear these words, which Thou didst speak from the Cross to the good thief—“This day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise.” Alas! I know that before enjoying Thy presence we must be purified by fire; but Thy mercies are greater than our sins, and I remember the words of the prophet. Our

destiny is in Thy hands. Hasten our deliverance, not according to the measure of our crimes, but according to the greatness of Thy Goodness.

Offertory.

O divine Redeemer, I beseech Thee to deliver those who hope only in Thee. Deliver them from that deep and frightful lake : deliver them from the jaws of the lion. Save them from being swallowed up in the abyss, and cast into darkness. May the Prince of Angels, may the Spouse of Mary, may this amiable Mother herself introduce them to the abode of bliss promised to Abraham and his posterity.

Preface.

It is truly meet and just, right and salutary, that we should always, and in all places, give thanks to Thee, O holy LORD, Father Almighty, Eternal God, through CHRIST our LORD, through Whom Thou hast

accorded us the hope of a blessed resurrection ; for to those who are faithful to Thee, death is not the loss of life, but the passage to a better life ; therefore, with all the celestial court, with Thy nursing-father, O Divine JESUS ! with all Thy faithful servants upon earth, I unite in singing this hymn to Thy glory. Holy, holy is the LORD GOD of Hosts. Thy glory fills all the heavens and the earth. Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the LORD. His Blood cries for mercy, and His Voice goes up to the throne of His grace. O Saint Joseph, intercede with Him, Whom thou didst carry in thy arms, for those souls who, although destined to eternal bliss, yet will be long deprived of it, without thy powerful intercession.

At the Canon.

O Almighty GOD, Thou art the Judge of all creatures, but Thou art also their Father ; cast, then, an eye of mercy upon

those souls that love Thee, and whose greatest grief is to be separated from Thee. For the sake of their good angels and their holy patrons, for the sake of JESUS and Mary, have compassion upon them; but, above all, on account of the infinite merits of Thy dear Son, for the sake of His divine Blood about to flow for them, open to them Thy Heart, and manifest to them Thy glory.

At the Elevation.

Thou hast deigned to descend upon this altar, O JESUS! Thou art even now in the midst of us, notwithstanding our unworthiness. We see and possess Thee, and the souls of the faithful departed, for whom I pray, are deprived of this ineffable happiness. O mystery of Justice and Goodness!

Continuation of the Canon.

Glorious patriarch Saint Joseph! Thou who hast experienced the blessed results

of the visit of JESUS to Limbo, obtain, I beseech thee, the same favour for those souls who are dear to Him. Obtain, at least, for them that the flames which afflict them may be tempered by some drops of that Precious redeeming Blood.

At the Pater.

Blessed be Thy Name, O thrice holy GOD, sovereign Judge of the living and the dead. Hallowed be Thy Name in heaven and on earth, May it be blessed and glorified by those faithful souls, for whom we invoke Thy mercy. May Thy divine Will to save them be accomplished this day by the effect of this all-powerful sacrifice. Bestow upon them that living Bread which is the possession of Thee. Accord to them the remission of their sins. Deliver them from those vengeful flames, and deliver us ourselves from sin, the greatest of all evils.

At the Agnus Dei.

How great is Thy love, O JESUS, which has led Thee to offer Thyself as a Sacrificial Lamb for all the sins of the world! How immense is that charity which caused Thee to take upon Thyself the burden of our debts, even after our death. O sweet Lamb! have mercy upon the faithful departed! O powerful Lamb, come to the help of those whose only hope is in Thee. O divine Lamb, whose Flesh has so often nourished those souls who suffer to-day, accord to them that happiness of which they have so often received the precious assurance. *Say only the word, and they shall be healed.*

Communion.

I desire to participate (spiritually) in this divine Banquet, in order to merit for them as much as is possible to me a permanent abode with Thy elect. And I especially offer Thee my prayers and the

good works that, with the help of Thy Grace, I may accomplish for the soul of N.

After the Communion.

O my GOD, may the remembrance of Thy Justice produce a salutary effect upon my soul, so lukewarm and so languid. Ah, I should never offend Thee, were the remembrance of Thy Judgments always present to me! Grant me, O GOD, this inestimable favour. Alas! my prayer is of itself too unworthy to be granted. Saint Joseph, my powerful protector, deign to present it at the Throne of thy Divine JESUS; as thou art the patron of a happy death, I beseech in advance thy powerful aid for that terrible moment.

At the Last Gospel.

I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He will hear my voice. I shall arise, even though I shall sit in darkness. The LORD will cause me to pass into the Dwel-

ling of Light, and then I shall contemplate His glory.

PRAVERS TO SAINT JOSEPH.

I.

FOR ALL SORTS OF NEEDS.

O my kind and powerful protector, Saint Joseph, how consoling is the assurance of Saint Teresa, that she has never prayed to thee in vain, and that those are always heard who have a true devotion for thee, and ask thy aid with entire confidence. Animated with the same confidence, I have recourse to thee, O worthy Spouse of the Virgin of virgins ! I cast myself at thy feet, and, sinner that I am, I dare to appear in penitence before thee. Do not reject my humble prayer, oh thou who hast borne the glorious name of the father of JESUS ! but listen favourably to me, and intercede for me with Him Who

wished to be called thy Son, and who always honoured thee as His father. Amen.

II.

PRAYER TO SAINT JOSEPH, THE PROTECTOR OF CHRISTIAN FAMILIES.

Great Saint Joseph, who wast chosen of God to be the head of the holiest and most august of families, deign to cast thy eyes upon us, and take us this day under thy special protection. Holy Patriarch, model of the holiest faith, and of the most perfect virtues, obtain for all the members of this family grace to withstand the dangers and seductions of the world, and to remain stedfastly attached to the LORD. Obtain for us that, always united by the bonds of the most tender charity, and encouraging one another mutually in good works, we may taste under thy auspices the sweetness of that peace which JESUS

has promised to His true disciples. But above all, when our last hour shall come, obtain for us that we may find grace before the Sovereign Judge, so that, reunited in heaven at the foot of Thy Throne, we may celebrate everlastingly the glory of GOD and thy praise. Amen.

III.

PRAYER TO SAINT JOSEPH TO OBTAIN THE CONVERSION OF A SINNER.

O holy Joseph, I earnestly recommend to thy care the salvation of the soul of N., which JESUS has redeemed by the shedding of His Blood. Thou knowest, great saint, how miserable are those who have banished this Divine Saviour from their hearts, and are in danger of eternally losing Him. Do not permit, then, that this soul so dear to me may be longer separated from Him ; enlighten it with regard to the dangers that threaten it.

Powerfully move this heart, and bring back this prodigal child to the bosom of the best of Fathers. Do not abandon it until thou hast opened to it the gates of Heaven, where it will bless thee eternally for the happiness which thou hast procured for it. Amen.

IV.

PRAYER TO SAINT JOSEPH FOR A SOUL IN PURGATORY.

Great Saint Joseph, who hast so tenderly loved JESUS, and felt so keenly the loss of His Presence during the time that thou wast in Limbo, I earnestly recommend to thee the soul of N., who may at this moment be suffering in Purgatory. Be thou his consoler in that place of suffering and expiation ! deign to apply to him the pious suffrages of the faithful, particularly my own ; be thou his intercessor with JESUS and with Mary, and obtain by thy prayers

that, delivered from the bonds that hold him in captivity, he may fly to the bosom of GOD, there to be eternally in the enjoyment of those delights with which the elect are blessed. Amen.

V.

PRAYER TO SAINT JOSEPH TO OBTAIN LIGHT
UPON THE CHOICE OF A STATE OF LIFE.

Great Saint, who wast so docile to the leading of the Holy Spirit, obtain for me grace to know to what state Providence has destined me. Do not permit me to err in this important choice, upon which depends my happiness in this world, and perhaps my eternal salvation, but obtain for me, that, enlightened concerning the Divine Will, and being faithful in following it, I may walk in the way that the LORD has determined for me, which will conduct me to a blessed eternity. Amen.

VI.

CONSECRATION OF A CHILD TO SAINT
JOSEPH.

Great Saint Joseph, who wast as a father to our Divine Saviour, we offer and consecrate to thee this child. Deign to be (*his*) protector and (*his*) father. Preserve in (*him*) the precious treasure of innocence. Protect (*him*) from all dangers to body and soul, and inspire in (*him*) from (*his*) earliest days a tender love for thee, for Mary, thy immaculate Spouse, and for JESUS, thy adorable Son. May thy holy protection be with (*him*) throughout (*his*) life. Watch over all (*his*) ways, guide (*him*) in all (*his*) enterprises, conduct (*him*) always in the path of the precepts of the LORD, and deign to bring (*him*) at the moment of (*his*) death into the Heavenly Jerusalem, there eternally to sing the Divine mercies, and thy paternal bounty. Amen.

VII.

PRAYER TO SAINT JOSEPH TO OBTAIN THE
SUCCESS OF A TEMPORAL ENTERPRISE.

Great Saint Joseph, who art all powerful with the hearts of JESUS and Mary, thou whom no one has ever invoked in vain, I prostrate myself at thy feet, and beg with the most firm and lively confidence—*(specify here the grace you wish to obtain)*. But if the object of my wishes is opposed to the Will of GOD and my own salvation, obtain for me the grace to resign myself with love to the Will of Him Who has a Father's heart for me, and Who in the afflictions which He sends me, as well as in the temporal gifts which He bestows upon me, desires only my greatest good and my eternal happiness. Amen.

VIII.

PRAYER TO SAINT JOSEPH TO OBTAIN A
SPIRITUAL GRACE.

Great Saint Joseph, who art the director, the friend, and the protector of those souls who desire to be perfect, thou who didst learn from JESUS and Mary how to conquer the powers of hell, and to practise all virtues, obtain for me—(*here specify the grace you wish to obtain*). Beloved Saint, my father, my guide, and my model, thou who hast so much zeal for the glory of JESUS CHRIST, and for my sanctification, canst thou reject my petition? No, I have the sweet confidence that thou wilt not reject it. Thy goodness will supply that which is lacking in my fervour, and according to the depth of thy love for me, and of thy power with Him Who has deigned to be called thy Son, thou wilt favourably hear me. Amen.

IX.

PRAYER TO SAINT JOSEPH TO OBTAIN THE
GRACE OF A HAPPY DEATH.

Great Saint Joseph, who art the model, the patron, and the consoler of the dying, I beg of thee to-day to grant me thy protection in the last hour of my life, for that terrible moment when I do not know if I shall have strength to call thee to my aid. I beseech thee to obtain for me that I may die the death of the just. But, in order that I may hope for so great a grace, obtain for me that I may live as thou hast done in the presence of JESUS and Mary, and that I may never afflict their eyes by hideous spots of sin. From this moment may I die to myself, to my passions and earthly desires, to all which is not GOD, in order to live solely for Him Who died for me. JESUS, Mary, Joseph, I make these resolutions under your auspices, and with

the hope of your aid. Be propitious to me now, and at the hour of my death, and grant that I may die in uttering your sweet names. Amen.

Pius VII., the Sovereign Pontiff, in his decree of April 28th, 1807, accords a perpetual indulgence of three hundred days to whoever recites, with a contrite heart, the three ejaculations which follow. If only one is recited, he accords one hundred days of indulgence, applicable in both cases to the souls of the faithful departed :—

JESUS, Mary, Joseph, I give you my heart and my soul !

JESUS, Mary, Joseph, assist me in my last agony !

JESUS, Mary, Joseph, let my soul send forth her last sigh in peace, with you to aid me !

Hail Joseph.

Hail Joseph, full of grace ! JESUS and Mary are with thee ; blessed art thou amongst men, and blessed is the fruit of thy chaste Spouse, JESUS. Holy Joseph, nursing-father of JESUS, and spouse of the blessed Virgin Mary, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

The same in Latin.

Ave Joseph gratiâ plene, JESUS et Maria tecum ; benedictus tu in hominibus, et benedictus fructus Spousæ tuæ JESUS.

Sancte Joseph, pater nutritie JESU, et beatæ virginis Mariæ Spouse, ora pro nobis peccatoribus nunc et in horâ mortis nostræ. Amen.

MEDITATIONS IN HONOUR OF
SAINT JOSEPH.

First Meditation.

Purity of Saint Joseph.

He that loveth cleanness of heart, shall
have the king for his friend.*

PREPARATORY PRAYER:

Grant, O my GOD, that during this
meditation all the thoughts of my mind,
all the affections of my heart, all the
workings of my soul may tend purely and
wholly to the service and glory of Thy
Divine Majesty.

Veni Sancte Spiritus, etc.

Ave Maria.

* Dui diligit cordis munditiam . . . habebit
amicum Regem.—Prov. xxii. 11.

FIRST PRELUDE.

To represent to myself Saint Joseph carrying the Child JESUS in his arms, and receiving His divine caresses.

SECOND PRELUDE.

Chaste Spouse of the Queen of Virgins, model and patron of interior souls, be thou the guardian of the purity of my heart, and grant that, preserving it without spot, I may be pleasing to the Hearts of JESUS and Mary.

FIRST POINT.

I ought to honour the purity of Saint Joseph.

JESUS, all sanctity, and the Author of all purity, delights in the whiteness of the lilies. He willed that His holy Mother should be a Virgin; that a virgin precursor should announce Him to His nation; a virgin disciple have part in His dearest favours: it was meet, then, that

the happy mortal destined to serve Him as foster-father should be a virgin also, and that the lily of virginity should be accompanied in his soul by all the virtues which could enhance its splendour. Oh ! how pure must have been this heart of Saint Joseph, against which beat so many times the heart of the Child JESUS ! His heart, which Mary judged worthy of her love and her confidence ! But if this purity was eminent before he was united to the Son and to the Mother by bonds so close and so tender, what prodigious increase must it not have received in the intimate relations that he held with them during the entire remainder of his life ! How venerable, then, ought he appear to me, this holy Patriarch, in whom I behold the most beautiful, the loveliest of all virtues shining forth in such brilliancy !

SECOND POINT.

I ought to imitate the purity of Saint Joseph.

Saint Joseph is the friend of pure souls : if I wish to merit his special protection and graces, I must sedulously cultivate in myself this virtue so dear to him. It is by watching over the thoughts of my mind, by repressing the irregular sallies of my imagination, by ruling the movements of my heart, that I shall cherish in all its freshness that delicate flower of innocence which the least breath suffices to tarnish.

To this interior vigilance I must join a care not less exact to guard my senses and mortify them in all things. Great Saint, my powerful protector, help me to adopt these means, however repugnant they may be to nature ; give me to taste those sweets reserved for the pure in heart ; draw me by the potent charms of the most

beautiful of virtues to the practice of that spirit of penance from which it is inseparable, and grant me the grace to thoroughly understand that the lily of purity can only blossom in the midst of thorns.

Colloquy with Saint Joseph.

To render to him the homage of my respect, my love, and my confidence. To beg him to inspire me with the spirit of vigilance, of prayer, of mortification, and to procure for me all the graces I need in order to preserve the precious treasure of purity stainless in my heart.

Resolutions.

To watch with care over my senses, my mind and my heart, in order to guard purity. To mortify my curiosity, and all inclinations which might endanger this precious virtue.

Offering of Resolutions.

I offer Thee, O my GOD, these resolutions. If Thou bless them not, I cannot be faithful to them; but of Thy goodness I hope for this boon, which I beseech in the Name and the merits of my Saviour, JESUS.

Holy Virgin, Mother of my GOD, who art my Mother also, my good Angel, my holy Patron, obtain for me the grace to keep these resolutions with perfect fidelity.

Spiritual Bouquet.

O Joseph! lily of purity, thou art worthy of the tenderness that JESUS and Mary had for thee!

Prayer.

I conjure thee, O glorious Joseph, by that paternal heart which GOD gave thee for His Son, and by that filial love which

JESUS had for thee, to take an especial care of the sanctification of my soul. Be thou my director, my guide, my father, and my model in the spiritual life, so that, following in thy footsteps, I may attain to the happiness of the elect, through JESUS CHRIST, &c. Amen.

Examen of the Meditation.

Have I prepared the subject of my meditation with care?—Did I recall it before sleeping?—Did I occupy myself with it to the exclusion of all other thoughts in waking during the night, in dressing myself this morning?—Did I, before the meditation, lift my soul to God, penetrating myself with His presence?—Did I maintain a suitable posture during the meditation?—Did I sedulously apply my thoughts and heart?—Did I not shorten the time?—Did I make the colloquies?—Have I taken practical resolutions?

Second Meditation.

Humility of Saint Joseph.

He that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*

PREPARATORY PRAYER (*page 28*).

FIRST PRELUDE.

To represent to myself Saint Joseph busied in the humble labours of his calling, or humiliating himself in prayer in the presence of our LORD.

SECOND PRELUDE.

Great Saint, who didst draw from the very heart of JESUS the spirit of sincere humility, obtain for me the grace that I may form myself upon this divine Model even as thou hast done, and thus share in those favours He accords only to humble souls.

* St. Luke xiv. 11.

FIRST POINT.

Humility of Saint Joseph.

If perfect purity has irresistible charms for our LORD, if it draws down His most precious gifts and His sweetest blessings, it may be said of humility also, that this virtue possesses for Him most powerful attractions, and opens to us all His treasures. The heart of Saint Joseph, gifted with such exceeding graces, was, then, profoundly humble, and if, as the holy Fathers have thought, the humility of Mary contributed not less than her spotless purity to draw down the Word of God within her bosom, in the same way we cannot doubt that the sincere contempt Saint Joseph had for himself, his desire to be abased and forgotten of creatures, determined, or at least confirmed, the choice that the LORD had made of him as the confidant of His secrets and the guardian of His only Son. And how this virtue

must have grown in his heart, when he became a witness of the inconceivable abasements of the Son of God! How must he have been moved when he beheld the Divine Word submissive to all the weaknesses, to all the infirmities of infancy; and, contemplating His annihilated Majesty, what judgment must he have passed upon the honours, the distinctions in which worldly pride takes delight! What judgment should I myself pass upon them, if I wish to resemble JESUS, Mary, and Joseph, and enjoy their love?

SECOND POINT.

I ought to strive to imitate the humility of Saint Joseph.

It was in conforming his heart to that of JESUS that St. Joseph attained to the perfection of a virtue which is the mother and the guardian of all others. This Divine Master said to him, far more by His

actions than by His words—*Learn of me, for I am meek and humble of heart, and you will find peace and repose of soul.* This lesson, so eloquent and so persuasive, JESUS addresses to me : He invites me to go and look at Him in the obscure spot where He hides all the treasures of His Divinity beneath those helplessnesses of Infancy to which He has voluntarily yielded Himself ; in that silence to which He condemns Himself Who is the Un-created Word ; in the obedience which He renders to His own creatures ; in those painful labours ; finally, beneath this exterior of common life which confounds Him with ordinary men, and even with the lowliest artisans. It is in this school of JESUS abased that I ought, after the example of Saint Joseph, to form my mind and my heart, if I wish to merit the eternal glory reserved above all for humility.

Colloquy with Saint Joseph.

To render to him the homage of my veneration and love. To supplicate him to obtain for me the gift of a sincere humility of heart, which shall lead me to despise myself, and to cherish my abjection through love of a humiliated JESUS.

Resolution.

To endeavour to esteem every one, and to mortify my self-love.

OFFERING OF RESOLUTIONS (*page 33*).

Spiritual Bouquet.

Saint Joseph, scorned of men, but great in the sight of GOD, obtain for me humility of heart.

PRAYER.

I conjure thee, etc. (*page 33*).

EXAMEN OF THE MEDITATION (*page 34*).

Third Meditation.

Love of Saint Joseph for obscurity and the hidden life.

Your life is hidden with CHRIST in GOD.*

PREPARATORY PRAYER (*page 28*).

FIRST PRELUDE.

To represent to myself the workshop of Saint Joseph, and to behold this holy Patriarch occupying himself there in the simple labours of his calling beneath the eyes of JESUS and Mary.

SECOND PRELUDE.

Great Saint, who didst always withdraw thyself from the eyes of men, make me fear the poison of vain-glory, and flee from the praises of my fellow-beings.

* Col. iii. 3.

FIRST POINT.

Love of Saint Joseph for obscurity and the hidden life.

Divine Providence had disposed all things so that JESUS should be born in poverty, and live unknown of men, until the moment came when He should manifest Himself to them through His preaching and His miracles ; but it was not through necessity that Saint Joseph conformed himself to this conduct. It was that he loved to conceal from the gaze of men the gifts and graces he received from heaven ; the humble, lowly occupation he had chosen was his delight ; he desired to be unknown of the world, that he might live for GOD alone. Who can say of how many celestial favours this love of obscurity was for him the fertile source ! His soul was like an enclosed garden, in which grew abundantly the flowers of all the virtues. His heart, which had no

other ambition than to merit the tenderness of JESUS and Mary, was indifferent to the esteem of creatures, and no human motive could move it. How many faults should I avoid, how much merit should I accumulate, if faithful in following the steps of this admirable model, I sought in all that I did the countenance and the approbation of GOD alone.

SECOND POINT.

Means of acquiring the love of a hidden life.

Saint Joseph is the director, the friend, and the protector of souls tending to perfection. He wishes to initiate me into this hidden life, the source of so many graces and of so much merit. What shall I do to attain it? I must model myself as he did to the pattern of JESUS and Mary. Saint Joseph had continually before his eyes a GOD hidden under the feeble appearance of an infant, a Virgin Mother, who loved to be reckoned among ordinary

women, hiding her privileges from the knowledge of men. Her heart grew more and more to love an humble life, which is distinguished in no way from those around it, showing nothing in itself that could fix the attention of creatures. Oh, how few can appreciate such an example ! Worldlings wish to shine. Persons of piety desire that their virtues should be known of men, for notwithstanding that they are freed from many illusions, yet they often fall into this snare of self-love, which causes them to be discontented with common or ordinary ways, and to seek practices peculiar to themselves, and a perfection which shall lift them above others. Oh, perfect simplicity and humility, perfect purity of affections and motives, how far am I from possessing you fully ! JESUS, Mary, Joseph, gain for me these precious virtues, of which you have given me such eloquent lessons and such touching examples.

Colloquy with Saint Joseph.

I beg of him to obtain for me, from the Sacred Hearts of JESUS and Mary, the love of a hidden life, and the desire to practise according to their example the interior virtues which are necessary for so holy an undertaking.

Resolution.

Determine to take GOD only as the witness of my good works.

OFFERING OF RESOLUTIONS (*page 33*).

Spiritual Bouquet.

Saint Joseph, whose life was hidden in GOD with CHRIST, pray for me. The more I am forgotten of men, the more the Heart of JESUS will be occupied with me.

PRAYER.

I conjure thee, etc. (*page 33*).

EXAMEN OF THE MEDITATION (*page 34*).

Fourth Meditation.

*Recollection of Saint Joseph, and his union
with God.*

The Kingdom of GOD is within you.*

PREPARATORY PRAYER (*page 28*).

FIRST PRELUDE.

Let me withdraw myself in spirit into
the humble dwelling of Nazareth ; all there
breathes calm and peace.

SECOND PRELUDE.

Perfect model of the interior life, teach
me to converse with JESUS and Mary, and
to please them in all things.

FIRST POINT.

*Recollection of Saint Joseph, and his union
with God.*

A hidden life seems unendurable to

* Luke xvii. 21.

worldlings and to dissipated souls, for they know not the interior delights with which the LORD loves to fill those who seek Him purely ; but those hearts that have experienced these ineffable joys prefer them a thousand times to all the most flattering and most seductive that the world can offer. Saint Joseph had had this sweet experience ; careful to withdraw himself from the attention of men, so as to seek the notice of GOD alone, he was a recipient of the most intimate communications of the Holy Spirit, and of the rarest favours of the Sacred Hearts of JESUS and Mary. Recollection and prayer were the habitual nourishment of his soul, his spirit was occupied only with the contemplation of divine perfections, his heart burned only with the fire of the purest love, his will, closely united to that of his GOD, was perfectly docile to the impressions of Grace. Thus our LORD was pleased to enlighten him with the clearest

light, and to heap upon him His most excellent gifts. Oh ! how I become my own enemy when I fail to apply myself as I ought to the practice of recollection and the cultivation of the spirit of prayer, depriving myself of those divine communications with which prayerful souls are bountifully favoured.

SECOND POINT.

Saint Joseph offers me his succour to acquire the spirit of recollection and of prayer.

The love of a hidden life should give me, as it did Saint Joseph, the spirit of recollection and of union with GOD ; but, to enjoy the precious advantages promised by this holy habit of mind, I shall have both within and without many combats to wage. Without, the world invites me to dissipation and frivolity ; within my soul, I find fatal inclinations, rising passions, distractions which importune me, and

weakness and inconstancy of mind which constantly cause the failure of my projects of perfection. Is it not, then, presumption in me to renew them to-day, and to aspire to that life of union with GOD from which I am so far removed? Ah! without doubt this work far surpasses my powers, but nothing is impossible to GOD, and His aid is assured to those who distrust themselves and confide in Him. Saint Joseph offers me at this moment his powerful protection. He wishes to assist me in acquiring the true spirit of prayer. I will, then, place my resolutions under his care, renewing them each day, and persevering in them in spite of all obstacles.

Colloquy with Saint Joseph.

To render him tributes of respect and confidence. To beg of him to obtain for me the abundant graces which are necessary to me in order to form the holy habit of recollection and of union with GOD.

Resolutions.

To recall often the presence of God, and to perform all my actions for Him.

OFFERING OF RESOLUTIONS (*page 33*).

Spiritual Bouquet.

Saint Joseph, perfect model of the interior life, pray for me.

PRAYER.

I conjure thee, etc. (*page 33*).

EXAMEN OF THE MEDITATION (*page 34*).

Fifth Meditation.*Saint Joseph's Spirit of Faith.*

The just man liveth by Faith.*

PREPARATORY PRAYER (*page 28*).

FIRST PRELUDE.

To seclude myself again in spirit within
the humble dwelling of the Holy Family.

SECOND PRELUDE.

Great Saint Joseph, inheritor of the faith
and virtues of the Patriarchs, obtain for
me the grace to live a life of faith, as all
the Saints have done.

FIRST POINT.

Saint Joseph's Spirit of Faith.

The spirit of faith is the most precious
gift that GOD can bestow upon the soul.

* Rom. i. 17.

By its light the illusions of sin and the falseness of the world's maxims are made plain to us. It dissipates all darkness, and gives reality to the truth which we believe. It shows to us the advantages of serving GOD and the powerful charms of virtue, and it draws us gently to practise them. Saint Joseph possessed in plenitude the spirit which creates Saints. He thoroughly despised the frivolous advantages which the world admires and seeks. He had no ambition save that of obtaining the Divine love and the treasures of Grace. Accustomed to view everything with regard to GOD, he knew how to disentangle his heart from all human motives, and to banish from his spirit all low and worldly thoughts. His intentions, his desires, his words and his actions, were animated by a supernatural motive, and tended entirely to GOD. When shall I labour seriously to form myself on so beautiful a model? When shall I devote myself to rendering

my faith as he did, living and practical, and to regulating my thoughts, my judgments, and my conduct upon the maxims which Faith proposes to me ?

SECOND POINT.

Means of acquiring the Spirit of Faith.

The spirit of faith is a spirit of truth and of light, as the spirit of the world is one of confusion and of error. The one can only be established in my soul upon the ruins of the other. If, then, I wish to be enlightened with the light from on high, I must not be deceived by the false maxims of this world. If I follow in the footsteps of Saint Joseph, how sweet and easy it will be to me to endeavour to form my heart and my spirit in the school of Nazareth ! The world esteems riches, honours, and distinctions. At Nazareth there was a GOD humiliated and hidden from the eyes of creatures, a Virgin, His Mother, whose heart, following His example, cherished

poverty, obscurity, and contempt. The world loves to be drunk with pleasures, and to lose in the tumult of its feasts the thoughts of eternity and the maxims of salvation. In Nazareth reigned peace and silence. JESUS, Mary, and Joseph, having the Divine law written in their hearts, meditated upon it night and day. They weighed all things in the scales of the sanctuary, and they judged worthy only of a sovereign contempt all that could not be brought to the love and service of the LORD. These are the examples that I should follow. I am not of the world. In receiving Holy Baptism, I have renounced its corruptions and its vanities ; I ought then to live by faith, according to the expression of the great Apostle, living in the world as though not of it.

Colloquy with Saint Joseph.

To beg him to obtain for me a true spirit of faith, which shall cause me to

despise the vain advantages of the world, and to seek solely the charms of virtue and the treasures of Grace.

Resolution.

To animate each of my actions with a supernatural motive.

OFFERING OF RESOLUTIONS (*page 33*).

Spiritual Bouquet.

Saint Joseph, inheritor of the faith and the virtues of the Patriarchs, pray for me. I belong not to the world, but to God.

PRAYER.

I conjure thee, etc. (*page 33*).

EXAMEN OF THE MEDITATION (*page 34*).

Sixth Meditation.

Saint Joseph's unshaken confidence in the Divine Goodness.

In Thee, O LORD, I have hoped ; let me never be put to confusion.*

* Ps. lxx. i.

PREPARATORY PRAYER (*page 28*).

FIRST PRELUDE.

*To represent to myself Saint Joseph flying
with Jesus and Mary into Egypt.*

SECOND PRELUDE.

Great Saint, who in the midst of the most painful trials didst constantly preserve a firm confidence in GOD, assist me to taste and understand these words. The LORD ruleth me, and I shall want nothing.

FIRST POINT.

Saint Joseph's confidence in Divine Providence.

The spirit of faith by which Saint Joseph was animated enabled him to see in GOD an attentive Father, who was always ready to grant him the help and the Graces of which he stood in need. The whole life of this holy Patriarch was but a perpetual exercise of the most loving confidence. This virtue shone most brightly when he

was commanded to fly into Egypt to save JESUS from the fury of Herod. By how many human considerations, it seems, would his flight have been stopped, or at least retarded. He was obliged to quit his country to go to a distant and foreign land, whose inhabitants, language, and customs were entirely unknown to him. He must abandon all the means of subsistence that he had possessed until then, and expose JESUS and Mary to the fatigues of a long journey and to the rigours of the most extreme poverty ; but it was impossible to shake his confidence. As soon as the will of Heaven was manifested to him, he set out on the way, without taking time to make any provision, or even waiting until daylight ; and yet no trouble disturbed his soul, for he knew that the Providence of GOD would not fail those who trust in Him. What an example ! How worthy it is of my admiration ! but, above all, how much should it encourage me also

to practise this child-like confidence in the best of fathers !

SECOND POINT.

I ought to imitate Saint Joseph's confidence in Divine Providence.

In placing before my eyes the example of Saint Joseph to-day, the LORD desires that I should become like him, and so acquire the spirit and practice of that confidence which honours GOD, and is always sure to obtain His Grace. He desires that I should be fully penetrated with the thought that it is He who directs and leads in all, and that nothing can happen without His command or His permission. Thus I should leave myself in His Hands, renouncing for ever all anxiety with regard to the future. How truly right it is, and how advantageous to me to throw myself blindly upon the care of Providence ! My GOD is Wisdom, Goodness, and infinite Power. He knows what is best for me ;

He can and will procure it for me. I have only, then, to allow myself to be led, and my only anxiety should be, not to withdraw myself from His Fatherly Hand by caring too humanly for my own interests, and not to take any step in life without consulting Him. "Take no thought for the morrow," said my adorable Master; "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." For my sake He takes the name of Father, of Shepherd, and of Friend. How can I help putting my whole trust in Him?

Colloquy with Saint Joseph.

To rejoice with him in his confidence in God, and the abundant graces that it merited for him. To pray him to obtain for me from the Divine Heart of JESUS a confidence which shall endure amidst all trials, and which difficulties shall only strengthen more and more.

Resolutions.

To put aside every too anxious thought

for the future, and to yield myself in peace to the guidance of the LORD.

OFFERING OF RESOLUTIONS (*page 33*).

Spiritual Bouquet.

The LORD ruleth me, and I shall want nothing.

PRAYER.

I conjure thee, etc. (*page 33*).

EXAMEN OF THE MEDITATION (*page 34*).

Seventh Meditation.

*Saint Joseph's submission to the order of
Divine Providence.*

Behold I come to do Thy Will, O GOD.*

PREPARATORY PRAYER (*page 28*).

FIRST PRELUDE.

To represent to myself again the humble dwelling of the Holy Family.

* Heb. x. 9.

SECOND PRELUDE.

Great Saint Joseph, who wast always obedient to the guidance of the LORD, obtain for me grace to give myself without reserve to His designs, and to accomplish His Holy Will in all things.

FIRST POINT.

Saint Joseph's submission to the order of Divine Providence.

Saint Joseph was raised to a high dignity, but the exalted duties confided to him by the LORD often caused his heart to suffer painfully. What grief, for instance, for this sensitive heart, so zealous for the glory of the Son of GOD, when he saw himself reduced to offer to Him for His first dwelling nothing better than an abandoned stable ! What a yet more bitter grief when he was obliged to expose Him to the rigours of extreme poverty during the flight into Egypt ! Again, what a source of pain when, as the Divine Child grew older, he

was obliged to employ Him in the hard labour of his occupation, command Him, and treat Him as an ordinary child ! A heart so humble and so penetrated with respect for JESUS as was that of Saint Joseph, can alone understand what all this must have cost him. Yet although no less touched with the abasement of his Saviour, he was equally subject to the will of Heaven, and this great Saint knew how to govern the movements of his heart, so that his tenderness for JESUS never led him in the very least to deviate from the plan which had been traced out for him. What an example ! How it puts to shame the vain reasoning and the guilty resistance that I so often oppose to the guidance of the LORD !

SECOND POINT.

I ought to imitate Saint Joseph's submission to the order of Divine Providence.

The example of Saint Joseph teaches

me that the continual care of a soul who wishes to please GOD should be to conform itself in all things to the will and to the guidance of this Sovereign Master. That in spiritual things, seeking one's own will spoils all, and the more generous I am in sacrificing my own wishes and natural inclinations to the designs of the LORD, the more I shall procure His glory and my own advantage. GOD knows the needs of all those who belong to Him: He knows what means of salvation, what kind of trials can be the most profitable to them. Some He sanctifies by long illnesses. He provides for others crosses and persecutions. These, are deprived of their goods or their reputations; those, are separated by death from the objects which they most cherished. Others suffer sorrow of spirit or of heart, the depth of which GOD alone knows. All these trials are the marks of predestination. They come from the Hand of the LORD, Who dispenses them with

wisdom and with love, and those who receive them with submission are sure of soon making rapid progress in the way of Holiness. Oh, how necessary it is for me to see in all that happens to me the Will of God, and to yield to it with love !

Colloquy with Saint Joseph.

To beg of him to obtain for me the same perfect submission to the order of Divine Providence of which his whole life was a perpetual exercise.

Resolution.

To receive cheerfully, as coming from the Hand of God, all the trials that can befall me.

OFFERING OF RESOLUTIONS (*page 33*).

Spiritual Bouquet.

Behold I come to do Thy Will, O God.

PRAYER.

I conjure thee, etc. (*page 33*).

EXAMEN OF THE MEDITATION (*page 34*).

Eighth Meditation.

Saint Joseph's love for Jesus and Mary.

I am come to cast fire on the earth ;
and what will I but that it be kindled ?

PREPARATORY PRAYER (*page 28*).

FIRST PRELUDE.

(Same as First Prelude to the Seventh Meditation, page 60.)

SECOND PRELUDE.

Great Saint, who wast the friend, the
confidant, and the guardian of my Saviour
and of my divine Mother, obtain for me
this favour, that I may be successful in my
efforts to make them known and loved.

FIRST POINT.

*I ought to imitate the love of Saint Joseph
for Jesus and Mary.*

The pure heart of Saint Joseph could
not fail to have the most ardent and tender
love for JESUS and His divine Mother, and

who can tell of how many virtues this love was the source in him? Continually attentive to the great Example beneath his eyes, earnestly endeavouring each day to render himself more worthy of the tenderness of the SON and the Mother, he had no other care than to unite and conform himself to all their sentiments and to all their interior dispositions. In the same way I should prove to them my love. The object of the predilections of JESUS and Mary, they have heaped their favours upon me ever since I came into the world. All these blessings are so many persuasive voices urging me to give back love for love, and to devote myself entirely to the worship of their divine Hearts. The first and essential part of this worship is union with them, and imitation of their virtues. A pure, an humble, and faithful soul alone can glorify them worthily. Oh, great Saint! who wast the first worshipper of the Sacred Heart of JESUS, the first imitator of the immaculate heart of

Mary, obtain for me the grace to honour them, to love them, and to imitate them, as thou hast done.

SECOND POINT.

The love of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary ought to inspire in me a holy zeal for their glory.

Fire cannot exist without flame. Zeal is the flame of divine Love. I cannot, then, flatter myself that I love the Sacred Heart of my Saviour and that of His holy Mother if I am not zealous for the interests of their glory. Saint Joseph's heart, I doubt not, was consumed by this zeal, and doubtless he wished ardently to make those hearts known and loved whose perfections were so well known to him. But God's time for them to be honoured by a public worship had not yet come. It was in the plan of our Redemption that JESUS and Mary should at that time remain unknown. The designs of Providence demand the

same method no longer. The fire that JESUS brought from heaven, and with which He wishes all our hearts to be consumed, should no longer be restrained. Thus I am certain to please the heart of Saint Joseph in devoting myself to the propagation of a worship which he would have been happy himself to have spread upon earth.

Colloquy with Saint Joseph.

To render to him the homage of love and veneration. To beg of him to obtain from the Sacred Hearts of JESUS and Mary an ardent love and a pure zeal, which shall lead me to honour them in all possible ways.

Resolutions.

To offer all my actions to the Hearts of JESUS and Mary. To do all for their love, and in union with them. Not to allow any opportunity to escape me in which I could make them known and loved.

OFFERING OF RESOLUTIONS (*page 33*).

Spiritual Bouquet.

Sacred Heart of JESUS, immaculate heart of Mary, I give you my heart !

PRAYER.

I conjure thee, etc. (*page 33*).

EXAMEN OF THE MEDITATION (*page 34*).

Ninth Meditation.

Saint Joseph's charity to his neighbour.

Go to Joseph.*

FIRST PRELUDE.

As far as possible to represent to myself the glory that Saint Joseph now enjoys in heaven.

SECOND PRELUDE.

Great Saint, who during thirty years modelled thyself upon the example of the God of Charity, and who dost not cease in heaven to interest thyself in the salvation of those who invoke thee, deign to listen to the prayers which I offer thee to-day, and obtain for me all those graces of which I

* Gen. xli. 55.

have need in order to walk in thy footsteps and attain, as thou hast done, to the glory of heaven.

FIRST POINT.

Saint Joseph's charity to his neighbours leads him to listen to their prayers.

The heart of Saint Joseph, conformed in all things to the Sacred Hearts of JESUS and Mary, was filled with the most tender charity for his neighbour. If the knowledge has not come to us of the works which this charity caused him to do, we can only attribute it to a secret disposition of Providence, which, considering the profound humility of his wishes, has thrown a veil of obscurity over all the actions of his life, and hides from us its details. Was he not capable of fulfilling in the most entire perfection the first and greatest precept of the Divine law, he whom the Holy Gospel calls "Just," he who was the inheritor of the virtues of the ancient patriarchs, and the faithful

imitator of the Incarnate Word? Yes, the heart of Joseph, this great heart, the most loving after those of JESUS and Mary, felt for human misery. Whilst on earth, he strove to console and to help the unfortunate, and now that in heaven he enjoys the sight of and the possession of GOD, he interests himself yet more earnestly in their needs. What a powerful motive of confidence and joy for me! Truly can I to-day ask and receive all things through the intercession of this great Saint, whose heart is to me that of a most tender father.

SECOND POINT.

Saint Joseph loves above all things to obtain for us those graces which concern our salvation.

During the past days Saint Joseph has instructed me by his example in the practice of all the virtues. I have successively considered in him that virginal purity, that profound humility, that love of obscurity

and silence, that life of recollection and piety, that spirit of faith, of confidence, and of love, and lastly that zeal for the honour of JESUS and Mary, which was the soul of all his actions, and in meditating upon his holy life I have formed the resolution of walking in his footsteps. To-day I can ask and am sure of obtaining, by his intercession, all the aid necessary to me for so noble an undertaking. Saint Joseph is interested in my spiritual needs ; he wishes for my sanctification and my salvation infinitely more than I can myself desire them. I can also recommend to his love all those who are dear to me. He is ready to receive and to grant all my demands, provided that they are accompanied by the ardour and confidence which know no doubt. Saint Teresa assures us that she never implored the assistance of this great Saint in vain, nor had she seen any one who, having invoked his aid, was deceived in his hopes.

Colloquy with Saint Joseph.

To render him my homage of veneration, love, and confidence. To expose to him in detail all the needs of my soul, praying him to obtain for me the powerful help that he knows to be necessary to my weakness.

Resolutions.

To have recourse to Saint Joseph in my difficulties and my weakness, and to beg him often to be my director and my guide in the way of perfection.

OFFERING OF RESOLUTIONS (*page 33*).

Spiritual Bouquet.

JESUS, Mary, Joseph, all for you, and by you.

PRAYER.

I conjure thee, etc. (*page 33*).

EXAMEN OF THE MEDITATION (*page 34*).

R. WASHBOURNE, 18 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON.









